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Message Text

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46
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 AID-05 OMB-01 CU-02

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01 /093 W
---------- 104656
R 121510Z MAY 75
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8692
INFO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, GR
SUBJECT: MAY DAY CELEBRATION IN ATHENS

REFS: A. ATHENS 3333 B. ATHENS 2636 C. ATHENS 2404

1. MAY DAY CELEBRATION HELD MAY 9 THIS YEAR SINCE MAY 1 FELL DURING GREEK EASTER HOLY WEEK (REFTELA). PRINCIPAL ELEMENT OF CELEBRATION WAS LARGE GATHERING OF WORKERS IN DOWNTOWN SQUARE (ESTIMATES RANGE UP TO FIFTY THOUSAND) AT WHICH SPEECHES DELIVERED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF GREEK WORKERS (GSEE) AND OF LABOR CENTERS ATHENS AND PIRAEUS. SPEAKERS VOICED WIDE VARIETY OF DEMANDS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN WORKING CONDITIONS, AND STRENGTHENING AND FULL DEMOCRATIZATION OF TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

2. ONE DEMAND, NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO TRADE UNION ISSUES, CALLED FOR THE PUNISHMENT OF THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR MILITARY DICTATORSHIP ESTABLISHED APRIL 21, 1967. IN ADDITION A SPECIAL RESOLUTION RELATING TO CYPRUS WAS ISSUED WHICH (A) CONDEMNED THE TURKISH AGGRESSION ON ISLAND, 8B)
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ACCUSED TURKS OF ENGAGING IN GENOCIDE OF GREEKS,

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(C) CALLED FOR "BROTHER WORKERS OF TURKEY" TO DEMAND RECALL
OF TURKISH TROOPS TO HOMELAND AND 8D) DEMANDED IMPLEMENTATION
OF RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING CYPRUS.

3. AT CONCLUSION OF SPEECHMAKING, AND ENUNCIATION OF
PETITIONS, PARADE TO POLYTECHNION TOOK PLACE WHERE
WREATHES WERE LAID IN HONOR OF STUDENTS KILLED DURING
NOVEMBER 1973 DISTURBANCES. ENTIRE PROCEEDINGS CONDUCTED
IN ORDERLY MANNER, AND NO INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE WERE
REPORTED. MANY SLOGANS, BOTH ON BANNERS AND ANNOUNCED FROM
HAND-HELD MICROPHONES, ATTACKED "IMPERIALISM AND
FASCISM," WHILE A NUMBER CALLED FOR OUSTER OF AMERICANS
FROM GREECE. WITHIN OVERALL THRONG, THERE WERE GROUPINGS
WHICH REPRESENTED FULL SPECTRUM OF LEFT FROM SOCIALISM
TO NAOISM. PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY ELEMENT WAS
GREAT PREPONSERANCE OF YOUTH AMONG PARTICIPANTS OF WHICH
MANY OBVIOUSLY STUDENTS AND NOT WORKERS.

4. IN STATEMENT AFTER CELEBRATION, MINISTER OF LABOR
LASKARIS EXPRESSED PRIDE THZT NATION'S WORKING CLASS HAD
DEMONSTRATED "THE MATURITY, SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND
LOFTY IDEALS WHICH INSPIRE ITS STRUGGLES AND MANIFESTATINS."
ON FOLOOWING DAY, PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS RECEIVED THE
COMMITTEE SHICH ORGANIZED THE MAY DAY ACTIVITIES, ACCEPTED
THE RESOLUTIONS PASSED THE PREVIOUS DAY, CONTRATULATED
THE COMMITTEE OF THE "ABSOLUTE ORDER" WITH WHICH CELEGRATIONS
TOOK PLACE AND GAVE ASSURANCES OF STRONG INTEREST WHICH
GOVERNMENT HAS IN WORKERS' PROBLEMS.

5. PM ALSO TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND WORKERS" COMMITTEE
OF ACUTE PROBLEMS FACING GREECE AT PRESENT TIME INCLUDING
FOREIGN THREATS, NEED TO ESTABLISH DEMOCRACY ON SOLID BASIS,
AND TASK OF RECONSTRUCTION OF ECONOMY. NOTE: LATTER
COMMENTS OF PM PROBABLY REFLECT IN PART GOG'S CONCERN OVER
RECENT RASH OF STRIKES AND "UNREASONABLE DEMANDS" WHICH HAVE
BEEN MADE BY SOME PARTS OF LABOR SECTOR (REFTELS B AND C).
KUBISCH

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